

25X1A

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INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Panama Political Situation

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1. The following analysis of the present political situation in Panama was made by a local business man who has an excellent knowledge of local economic and political conditions:

The campaign of Colonel Jose Antonio Remon Cantera is probably a serious political mistake. The group that is backing Remon had available an excellent Presidential candidate in Henrique Obarrio, Comptroller of the Republic, whose excellent reputation and integrity would have had wide appeal. With Obarrio as President and Remon, his brother-in-law, as Chief of Police, economic and political stability could undoubtedly have been achieved. Remon, however, sincerely believes that he himself constitutes the only real hope for political (and therefore economic) stability; and he believes that the people will share his convictions. Accordingly, despite what he regards as an economic and physical sacrifice, he has "reluctantly" agreed to run for President.

b. Remon's major opposition will, of course, come from Roberto Chiari, who will receive the bulk of the Interior vote. Remon's influence in the city, however, may counterbalance the instinctive reaction of the average voter against the police-type power. In a fair, honest vote count, these two factors could well tend to make the issue close. The support of the Partido Renovador for Remon is important in that the San Blas vote and a large block in Colon is automatically swung to his support.

c. Since Remon has resigned his position as Chief of Police, the immediate question at issue is whether the Panama National Police (PNP) will remain loyal to him or show allegiance to the new Commandant, Bolivar-Vallarino. In the event that their loyalty is to the latter, the possibility must be taken into account that Vallarino may not support Remon with force if Remon fails to win the election on an honest basis. It is difficult to believe that Vallarino will desert Remon's camp at this time, but on the other hand the fact must not be overlooked that it would be psychologically onerous for Vallarino to hold down the populace, subdue street riots, and be maligned in print simply to maintain Remon in office.

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2. The uncertainty of continued PNP support of Remon is also revealed in a report
25X1X submitted by [REDACTED] who advises that although Pastor Ramos, PNP Chief
in Colon, is a good friend of Remon's, he is an even better friend of Vallarino's.
In view of this factor, it is believed that in the future, the PNP in Colon can
be expected to support Vallarino rather than Remon.

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